Infrastructure status to Coal, Petroleum and Rail sector

1601. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government plan to give infrastructure status to Coal, Petroleum and the Rail sector;

(b) whether Government are not considering the same status to the transport and aviation industry; and

(c) if so, what are Government's comments on this?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT): (a) Section 80 IA of the Income-tax Act provides for fiscal benefits to infrastructure sector, substantially on the basis of recommendations contained in the Rakesh Mohan Committee Report on Infrastructure. The sectors referred to are dealt with as under:—

Coal Sector:— No sector specific fiscal benefit is available under the provisions of this section.

Petroleum:— An undertaking engaged in commercial production of oil or oil refining is entitled to seven year tax holiday from the year it starts production or oil refining.

Rail Sector:— Under section 80 IA of the Income-tax Act, fiscal benefits by way of a five year tax holiday and a deduction of thirty per cent of profits in the subsequent five years within a period of twelve assessment years beginning with the assessment year in which an enterprise begins operating an infrastructure facility on Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) or Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) basis subject to certain conditions specified in the section are allowed. One of the conditions is that an enterprise shall develop, maintain and operate a new infrastructure facility, which shall be transferred to the Central Government within a specified period.

Roads, highways, bridges, ports, rail system, inland ports and inland waterways are included in the meaning of "infrastructure facility" under Section 80 IA of the Act.

(b) Transport and aviation sectors are also covered to the extent stated above (roads and airports are included in the meaning of "Infrastructure facility" under section 80IA).

(c) Does not arise.

Cancellation of projects

1602. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 77 projects worth Rs. 85,000 crores in every sector of the economy have been stalled or cancelled for non-viability caused by the present economic slumps; and

(b) if so, what are the effects of this on our growth plans?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT): (a) and (b) As on June 1998, 451 projects costing Rs. 20 crores and above with total estimated cost of Rs. 1,65,071 crores were on the monitor of the Department of Programme Implementation. These projects are being funded according to their priority and date of commissioning within each sector depending on the availability of funds. No project has been declared unviable as a result of present economic scenario.

Steps to curb industrial recession

1603. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a comprehensive plan has been launched to extricate the industry from the grip of recession; and

(b) if so, the salient features thereof, indicating the steps taken and to be taken to increase public expenditure and reduce its expenditure as a step towards curbing recession?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT):

(a) and (b) In order to arrest the slowdown in industrial growth, Government have taken various measures through the Budget 1998-99 and thereafter to stimulate and revive industrial growth. The package of measures announced inter alia, included:

(i) de-licensing of coal and lignite, petroleum refining and sugar.

(ii) increase in limit for aggregate investment by NRIs raised from 5% to 10%.

(iii) rationalisation of tariff structure by introducing special additional duty of customs duty.

(iv) Plan outlay for Energy, Transport and Communications stepped up by 35% to Rs. 61,146 crores in 1998-99 (BE) as against Rs. 45,252 crores in 1997-98 (RE).

(v) Central and State Electricity Regulatory Commissions to be set up to rationalise power tariffs.

(vi) Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act (ULCRA) to be repealed, which would lead to a step up in construction activity and demand for materials such as cement, steel etc.

The recent measures announced by the Government to stimulate and revive industrial growth include:

(i) Special package announced for revival of growth in exports.

(ii) The Government has allowed buy back of shares and inter-corporate loans to boost investment and revive the capital market.

(iii) To give an immediate boost to industrial activity, the busy season credit policy announced by RBI has contemplated no upward revision of interest rates.

(iv) Counter guarantees given by Government to three major fast track power projects, are expected to lead to financial closure and thus create demand for basic and other goods.

(v) Six lane, 7000 km highways at a cost of Rs. 28,000 crores are to be taken up.

(vi) Government has agreed to permit foreign equity in the insurance sector. The opening of the insurance sector would provide long term finance for the infrastructure sector.

(vii) Four Task Forces have been constituted for Steel, Capital Goods, Commercial Vehicles and Cement to recommend policy interventions to address the problems faced by these sectors. The Task Forces have submitted their recommendations to the Ministry of Finance. The Government has already notified exemption of seven inputs used in steel manufacturing from the special customs duty. The policy announcements relating to other sectors are expected shortly.

राजस्थान में सरकारी क्षेत्र के उपक्रम

1604. **श्री ओंकार सिंह लखावत:** क्या उद्योग मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) राजस्थान में सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के अन्तर्गत कुल कितने उद्योग हैं तथा इनमें से कितने लाभ में एवं कितने घाटे में चल रहे हैं और इस सम्बन्ध में ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ख) राजस्थान में सरकारी क्षेत्र के उपक्रमों को लाभप्रद बनाने के लिए सरकार द्वारा अप्रैल, 1998 से क्या प्रयास किए गए हैं और इस सम्बन्ध में ब्यौरा क्या है?

उद्योग मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सुखबीर सिंह बादल): (क) और (ख) राजस्थान राज्य में सरकारी क्षेत्र के 6 उपक्रम हैं। वर्ष 1996-97 तक की जानकारी उपलब्ध है, जिसके अनुसार लाभकारिता की स्थिति का विवरण इस प्रकार है:—